

## Contributions

### HOW TO MEET DISCOURAGEMENTS

Z. T. LIVINGOOD

If you have ever been discouraged, dear reader, then these lines are for *you*. The entirely free from this malady "are very few and far between." All have had some discouragements, some more some less.

Some survive and some succumb and are drawn into the whirlpool and are destroyed by its destruction and pernicious power. Moses was subject to these spasmodic attacks. Elijah did not escape their poisonous stings. John the Baptist was suffering with the evil when in prison and the apostles frequently were perplexed and cast down with its baneful influence.

After some few years of close study and observation, in the midst of an abundance of occasions for indisposition and disheartenment, I have found a few things very helpful. They have been helpful to me and others around me. May God bless them to your helpfulness. Many of our discouragements are imaginary. Reader, do not pass this statement and fact lightly by. We magnify the things that bring despair. Let us magnify God, Jesus, the things that make for righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The first and the greatest power in heaven and on earth to dispel gloom and darkness and despair is Jesus of Nazareth. "In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion." Ps. 27:5. And "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Ps. 46:1. Paul writing to the brethren at Corinth in his second letter 1st chapter and 4th verse says "Who comforteth us in all our tribulations." If our teacher and our Savior is the mighty one we believe and teach him to be, if he has more authority and power than our adversary then we ought not to be unduly troubled in spirit.

Is Christ a very present help in time of trouble?" Is he? Then why not go to him. Why not take your discouragements to Jesus, and take your own self and let Jesus hide you and your troubles in his pavilion? Why not? Do you, kind reader, believe him? Have you real faith in him? Let not your unbelief prevent you from going and going trustingly. Jesus comforted John in prison. God comforted Elijah under the juniper tree and at the mouth of the cave. Jesus comforted Paul in his deepest and darkest discouragements. When Job's earthly friends failed to comfort him God speedily gave him relief and gladdened his drooping spirit. Our real friends who are truly children of God can help us over life's rough passages. Job truly said to his three friends, "miserable comforters ye are." We learn to over-

## BRETHREN EVANGELIST

come discouragements by coming under the divine Teacher, under his care, under his influence and under his guidance. We learn how to help others when we help ourselves to overcome life's vexations and conflicts. How a right word, fitly spoken heals a wounded heart. Oh! that Jesus may teach us to know the right word and to teach us to speak it fittingly.

There is another thing that helps us to overcome troubles and discouragements, and that is to be busily engaged in our Master's work. There is some truth in the saying "An idle brain is the devil's workshop." God said to Elijah when he hid in the cave, "go anoint Hazael king over Syria," etc. The Lord's command is, "go and do as I command you, go anoint, go teach, and I am with you always." These three things are helpful in times of discouragements: 1. Our Lord Jesus. 2. Christ's true and real children. 3. Our constant obedience to the Lord's command.

### OUR OPPORTUNITIES

G. W. RENCH

"The mill will never grind with the water that is passed."

If we as a people are ever to become great—great as real followers of Jesus, great as doers of the Word, great as defenders of the plan of salvation as outlined in the Book, then we must learn our advantages and *press* them upon the people. Vast sums of money are means of great power, but like a wind upon the sails of a ship unless it is headed in the right direction it will only the sooner bring us to our shame.

Fine talent and brilliant men and women are means of strength to our cause, but unless expended upon the correct plea, will only add ill to worse. We have had brilliant men in the ministry who made a failure of the work in our church, and have left it, simply because their energies were spent in the wrong direction. They did not understand wherein our strength as a people lay, or were too cowardly to press home that strength. Our people as a rule are quick to see whether one is working entirely for the interests of the church or for their own selfish interests. There are too many yet who will advocate anything—it makes no difference how nonsensical—simply to "stand in" with the crowd. Their theology is made by Myer, Gordon or Sammy Morris rather than by Jesus and Paul. If Dr. Dowie says so, then to such person there is no use to quote Jesus or Paul. I noticed not long since a report from one of our districts where the congregation (more likely three or four of the leading members) requested the minister to preach on Divine Healing. The report said he did so convincingly and to the entire satisfaction of all present. The idea con-

veyed was that if only the congregation had requested a series of sermons against the theory, whatever it is, then such thunderbolts of truth and logic would have gone out from that place that every one of the advocates of the theory would have repented in sack-cloth and ashes! *If the congregation only had requested it, see?*

The opportunities are ripe if we will only seize them by which we may become a greater power for good. There is no use expending our energies on every passing dogma and whim of man. Several years ago it was the "soul-sleeping" theory. Believe it if you want to, but don't try to make the impression that it is a doctrine of the church. There are hundreds of good people who will help to build up the church who do not believe this, but who do believe in faith, repentance, immersion, the ordinances and a pure life. About four years ago the cry was that it was not the will of God that people should die and go home to glory, but that disease and death were to be attributed to the devil so that when some good saint died and went to glory the devil was at the bottom of the mischief. I never knew before that the devil was interested in getting people to realize what was such a source of joy to Paul and the early Christians, viz., "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens." Believe it if you want to, but don't disturb the peace of the church because there are a lot of fools who *don't believe* that the Lord and the devil have gone into partnership—the one preparing the mansions and the other seeing to it that you will die and get one of them.

Let us cease wasting ammunition on the supposed purposes and wishes of God that are not revealed in the Book. If "God through the Spirit" has revealed some great things to you, as we are continually hearing that he has, and has withheld them from us because of our impure lives, in other words, because we are not as good as you are, have your "wonderful revelations" published so that we may paste them in our Bibles as an appendix. Now, believe that God does make such revelations if you want to, but don't push every one else too near the brimstone because he doesn't advocate the same thing. There are many of us who have our hands full in doing the will of God as revealed, not only to us, but to the whole world. There are two or three verses of II Peter 1, that keep me so busy that I have not feared as yet that if the Lord does not reveal something else I should soon have nothing to do: "Add," don't lose the force of the first word, *we* are to "add," not God. "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowl-